

Intensive Language Study: Nepali

Course number: NEPA-1000

6 Credits – 90 Class hours

SIT Study Abroad Program:

Nepal: Social Entrepreneurship in the Himalayas

The intensive study of Nepali is the first prerequisite for successful entry into the native communities of Nepal. Language training in Nepali begins immediately after arrival in the country, and throughout the semester students are encouraged to apply their language skills in all facets of the program, especially during home stay, Village Excursion, and the Independent Study Project.

Objectives:

1. To gain proficiency in spoken Nepali.
2. To use Nepali confidently and effectively in a variety of situations.
3. To gain a basic proficiency in reading Devnagari script.
4. To use Nepali confidently outside the classroom and develop further knowledge of the language and communication skills by regular interaction with Nepali speakers.

The purpose of language training is communication. Students need to be able to communicate in Nepali to work/stay effectively in Nepal. We emphasize language acquisition (Natural Approach) for application in real life situations. The successful completion of the language training will give the learner a good foundation for language usage in day-to-day life. For each component, topics are identified; tasks performed under each topic are determined and designed by the teachers according to the students' learning styles and capacities. Each lesson presents the situation, e.g. eating with host family, and the topic, e.g. food and socializing. Students learn to use a certain "dialogue" appropriate to the topic. Dialogues are used to assist in expressing needs, wants, questions, responding to questions, giving and asking opinions, and interviewing, etc.

*This syllabus is representative of a typical semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

*Course Syllabus**

After completion of the Nepali Language course at SIT Nepal, the majority of students can communicate confidently on many different subjects in different contexts. These include but are not limited to:

1. Exchanging of greetings and leave taking in formal and informal situations.
2. Asking and answering questions about personal information; e.g. name, age, home, occupation, about the family, etc.
3. Describing food and drink needs and preferences.
4. Purchasing food and other items.
5. Asking about ingredients, cooking utensils and methods of cooking.
6. Asking and giving directions to specific locations.
7. Asking and telling about clothing color, size of items and discussing about clothing with a tailor.
8. Naming parts of the body and describing minor ailments.
9. Informing host family about the intention of going out (field trip, excursion, off days, party, etc.)
10. Describing about SIT and coming to Nepal.
11. Interviewing in different fields of interest during FSS, CAD and Independent Study Project.
12. Describing and comparing weather in Nepal and the USA, and other locations.

Methodology

In terms of language teaching approaches, methods and techniques, we utilize the following approaches: grammar-translation method, direct method, audio-lingual method, silent way, community language learning, total physical response, and communicative approach. During the semester, students attend 2.5 hours of language class five days a week. Approaches are employed individually language trainers in their classrooms (e.g. realia, demonstration, situational, drilling, games, etc.) Since our main focus is language acquisition, we do not allow our learners to speak other languages in the classroom. However we sometimes deal with grammar and other issues related to Nepali language learning in English.

Class Schedule

Students will have at least 100 class hours. During our Kathmandu stay, the class schedule is Monday-Friday 8:30am-11:00am. Language class hours and timing may be different during our Village and Tarai Excursions. The classes are shuffled and reshuffled according to the learning pace and student number so that students will be familiar with each teacher's teaching styles and techniques. Extra individual classes will be provided if students want to work more on language. Students will not be staying in a formal class everyday, different language activities (e.g. games, cooking class, assignments, debate) are organized related to language learning.

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Evaluation

Teachers plan lessons and evaluate student performance at daily meetings. Students are then regrouped according to learning pace and individual strengths and weaknesses. At the end of the semester, teachers collectively compose a final evaluation for each student, taking into account classroom performance and the use and development of language skills in the host community. Students are graded in each of the following areas: grammar, vocabulary, oral and reading comprehension, fluency, pronunciation, motivation, attendance, progress, Devnagari and language usage outside of classroom. Three different Nepali language tests are conducted during the semester. The score is taken into account in the final grading as well. The Academic Director, based on the language teachers' final evaluation determines the final semester language grade. Although not part of grade, students will be given two ACTFL oral exams before and after ISP by a certified tester at the conclusion of language study to gauge students' language acquisition.

ACTFL Test Score Description

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	Functions	Context	Content	Accuracy	Quantity	Role
Advanced	Unfamiliar situation Support opinion Hypothesizes	The world, hypothetical situation	Abstract topics, professional	No patterns of errors	Extended speech	Equal partner, initiate conversation
Intermediate High	Situation with complication Describe and narrate present, past, and future	Community, self, and surrounding	Work, recreation, social, and current events	Generally comprehensible Full control of elementary construction Partial control on structures Vocabulary range	Paragraphed level Linked sentences	Full participation
Intermediate Mid	Maintain simple conversation Ask/answer question Handle simple situation	Personalized surrounding	Daily routine, likes and dislikes, simple Q/A Familiar topics, personal background	Partial control on basis Structures Sympathetic listener	Discreet sentences or simple connection	Reacts to a question
Intermediate Low	Nonfunctional ability Memorized phrases	Memorized phrases	Basic set of things and lists	Some intelligibility	Words, chunks, pieces, fragmented language	Dependent Predictable question

References:

- ❑ Let's Learn Nepali. Author: SIT Language Teachers, Kathmandu, Nepal 1999
- ❑ Practical English-Nepali & Nepali-English Dictionary. Author: SIT Language Teachers, Kathmandu, Nepal 2004
- ❑ SIT Language Hand outs

STUDENTS SHOULD REFER TO THE SIT STUDY ABROAD STUDENT HANDBOOK for policies on academic integrity, ethics, academic warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment, and the academic appeals process.

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